

Construction Begins on Major Infrastructure Improvement Project in Buchanan County (Nov. 30, 2006)

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN RICK BOUCHER

Rosanne-Hurley Regional and 6 & 20 Mile Branch Water Projects Combined Groundbreaking Ceremony

November 30, 2006

Hurley, Virginia

I am pleased to return to Buchanan County this morning to celebrate the start of construction on two new water systems, which will provide public water service to nearly 100 homes . Today's groundbreaking marks another significant success in our ongoing work to expand Southwest Virginia's water and wastewater infrastructure.

Today we celebrate the start of construction on the first phase of a major multi-phase project, the goal of which is to eventually bring safe and reliable drinking water to the community of Hurley and its surrounding areas. The first phase , for which we break ground today, will bring water service to the Roseann community. Currently, the residents of Roseann currently have no access to publicly provided drinking water and rely on wells or springs .

Additionally, today we mark the start of construction for an extension of public water service to more than 30 homes in the 6&20 Mile Branch community currently without access to public water.

One of my primary goals in representing Southwest Virginia is to work with our local governments to obtain federal funding for our regions's water and wastewater facilities. The construction of this infrastructure is an essential step in our efforts to encourage economic development throughout our region and to improve the quality of life for Southwest Virginians.

The construction which begins today will provide water service to 62 homes in the Roseann Community. Water service will also be provided to the Hurley Community Center, where we gather today. This groundbreaking is the first step in a multi-phase project that will eventually bring public water service to the Hurley community.

The total cost of the Roseann phase of this multi-phase project is \$1,372,031 , which is being provided with the assistance of several federal funding sources at my request. A federal grant in the amount of \$400,353 has been provided by the Appalachian Regional Commission, and a federal grant in the amount of \$339,645 has been provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant Program. Additionally, the U.S. Department of the Interior through its Abandoned Mined Land program is providing \$533,148 towards the project. The remaining \$98,885 has been provided locally.

As part of the project, more than five miles of water lines will be installed along Routes 650 and 643 from just outside of the Home Creek community, through the Roseann community, to the Hurley Community Center. Additionally, one pump station will be constructed and thirteen new fire hydrants will be placed throughout the community.

Once construction on the Roseann phase is completed, I will continue to work with the Public Service Authority to seek the federal funds necessary to construct the remaining phases of this project.

Today also marks the start of construction of an extension of public water service to more than 30 homes in the community of 6&20 Mile Branch. The total cost of this project is \$1,187,603, and several federal funding sources have contributed. The U.S. Department of the Interior through its Abandoned Mined Land program is providing federal funding in the amount of \$578,719, and an additional federal Community Development Block Grant in the amount of \$330,000 has been awarded for this project. Additionally, the Virginia General Assembly has provided a grant in the amount of \$110,000 for the project, and the Coalfield Water Development Fund has also provided \$110,000 toward the project. The remaining \$58,884 has been provided locally.

As part of the project, nearly 5 miles of water lines will be installed in the 6&20 Mile Branch Community. Additionally, one 10,000 gallon water storage tank will be constructed as well as three booster pump stations.

There are several individuals who deserve our thanks today for the efforts they have made on behalf of this project.

I want to commend Darrell Cantrell, the tireless Public Service Authority Director for Buchanan County, Dexter Ray, Chairman of the Public Service Authority Board, and other Members of the PSA Board.

I also want to thank Pat Justus, who represents this area on the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors, and other Members of the Board, all of whom deserve recognition for their effective work in aid of this project.

I also want to recognize the excellent staffs of the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development and the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, who work tirelessly to expand access to public water service in the region.

I also want to commend State Senator Phillip Puckett and Delegate Dan Bowling for their service to the residents of Buchanan County and for their assistance with this project. The Abandoned Mined Land funds, Appalachian Regional Commission funds, and the Community Development Block Grant are federal monies, but state agencies play a role in deciding to which projects the funds are allocated. Phillip and Dan have played a key role in directing these funds to Buchanan County and securing an additional appropriation of funds to advance water and wastewater infrastructure development across Southwest Virginia.

Finally, I would like to thank my Project Manager, Courtney Lamie, for her persistent and persuasive efforts on behalf of this project.

The projects which are beginning construction today are an example of what can be achieved when citizens and government officials at the local, state, and federal levels work together in aid of a common purpose. For that cooperation and successful work in providing the residents of the 6&20 Mile Branch community and the Roseann community with safe and reliable public drinking water, I want to commend all here and offer special congratulations to the residents who will be receiving water service.